

July 2019

Dialogue between Death and a Lady

Author Unknown

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk



Part of the [Folklore Commons](#), and the [Music Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "Dialogue between Death and a Lady" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 82.
https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk/82

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Kenneth S. Goldstein Collection: Broadside Ballads at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Broadside Ballads: England by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

DEATH and a LADY.

Very suitable to be learned by heart in these degenerate times.

DEATH.

FAIR lady lay your costly robes aside,
No longer may you glory in your pride;
Take leave of all your carnal vain delight,
I'm come to summon you away this night.

LADY.

What bold attempt is this, pray let me know
From whence you came and whither I must go;
Shall I, who am a lady, yield or bow
To such a pale fac'd visage, who art thou?

DEATH.

Do you not know me? well I'll tell you then,
'Tis I who conquer all the sons of men;
No pitch of honour from my dart is free,
My name is *Death*, have you not heard of me?

LADY.

Yes, I have heard of you time after time,
But being in the glory of my prime,
I did not think that thou would'st call so soon,
Why must my morning sun go down at noon.

DEATH.

Talk not of noon, you may as well be mute,
This is no time at all for to dispute,
Your richest jewels, gold and garments brave,
Your houses, lands, they must new masters have:
Though thy vain heart to riches was inclin'd,
Yet thou, alas! must leave them all behind.

LADY.

My heart is cold, I tremble at the news,
Here's bags of gold, if thou wilt me excuse,
And seize on those, thus finish thou the strife,
With such of those who weary are of life.
Are there not many bound in prison strong,
In bitter grief of soul have languish'd long.
From all would find the grave a place of rest
From all their grief in which they are oppress?
Besides there's many with their hoary head,
And palsy joints, by which their joys are fled.
Release thou them whose grief and sorrow's great,
And spare my life to have a longer date.

DEATH.

Tho' they with age are full of grief and pain,
While their appointed time they must remain,
I come to none before my warrant's seal'd,
And when it is they must submit and yield:
I take no bribes, believe me it is true,
Prepare yourself to go, I come for you.

LADY.

Death be not so severe, let me obtain
A little longer time to live and reign;
Fain would I stay, if thou my life wilt spare,
I have a daughter beautiful and fair,
I'd live to see her wed whom I adore;
Grant me but this and then I'll ask no more.

DEATH.

This is a slender frivolous excuse,
I have you fast, and will not let you loose,
Leave her to Providence, for you must go,
Along with me whether you will or no.
I *Death* command great kings to leave their crown,
And at my feet to lay their sceptres down,
If unto kings this favour I'll not give,
But cut them down, can you expect to live
Beyond the limits of your time and space?
No, I must send you to another place.

LADY.

You learned doctors now express your skill,
And let not *Death* of me obtain his will;
Prepare your cordials, let me comfort find,
My gold shall fly like chaff before the wind.

DEATH.

Forbear to call, their skill will never do,
They are but mortals here as well as you,
I give the fatal wound my dart is sure,
'Tis far beyond a doctor's skill to cure.
How freely can you let your silver fly,
To purchase life, rather than yield to die.
But while you flourish'd here in all your store,
You would not spare one penny to the poor.
In all your pomp the poor you then did hate,
And like rich Dives scourg'd them from thy gate.
Tho' you did thus to those whom you did scorn,
They like to you into the world were born;
Tho' for your alms they did both cringe and bow,
They bore God's image here as well as you.
Tho' in his name their suit to you they make,
You would not give one penny for his sake;
My Lord beheld wherein you did amiss,
And calls you hence to give account for this.

LADY.

O heavy news! must I no longer stay?
How shall I stand good God, in thy great day?
Down from her eyes the dying tears did flow!
And said there's none knows what I undergo;
Upon a bed of sorrow here I lie,
My carnal life makes me afraid to die;
My sins alas! are many great and foul,
Which have deformed my immortal soul;
And tho' I do deserve the righteous frown,
Yet pardon Lord, and send thy blessing down:
Then with a dying sigh her heart did break,
And did the pleasures of the world forsake.
Here we may see the high and mighty fall,
For death he sheweth no respect at all,
To any one of high or low degree,
Great men submit to *Death* as well as we:
Tho' they are gay, their lives are but a span,
A lump of clay, so poor a creature's man.